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TEACHING ENGLISH IN MULTIPLE LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT.

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APPROXIMATELY 480 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKING JAPANESE AT FOUR LOS ANGELES CITY HIGH SCHOOLS WERE STUDIED TO DETERMINE HOW EXPOSURE TO JAPANESE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM INFLUENCED THE STUDENTS' WORK IN CLASS. THIS REPORT IS BASED ON RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRES FILLED OUT BY 303 OF THE STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR EXPOSURE TO JAPANESE AT HOME, THEIR BIRTHPLACE, AND THEIR SELF-EVALUATION OF PROFICIENCY IN READING, SPEAKING, LEARNING VOCABULARY, AND UNDERSTANDING GRAMMAR. FIVE GROUPS WERE ESTABLISHED RANGING FROM THOSE WITH DAILY EXPOSURE TO JAPANESE (157 STUDENTS) TO STUDENTS WITHOUT ANY CONTACT WITH THE LANGUAGE OUTSIDE OF CLASS (37). IT WAS FOUND THAT THOSE GROUPS WITH GREATER EXPOSURE TO JAPANESE RATED GRAMMAR MORE DIFFICULT THAN VOCABULARY OR "HEARING." STUDENTS WITHOUT FREQUENT EXPOSURE TO THE TARGET LANGUAGE HAD MORE DIFFICULTY WITH "HEARING" THAN WITH GRAMMAR. THE TEACHERS OF THESE CLASSES COMMENTED THAT READING ABILITY AND GRAMMAR LEARNING SEEM LEAST AFFECTED BY OUTSIDE EXPOSURE TO JAPANESE, WHILE THERE IS A MARKED DIFFERENCE AMONG THE GROUPS IN RATE OF LEARNING VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING ABILITY. THIS REPORT INCLUDES SUGGESTED TEACHING TECHNIQUES FOR HETEROGENEOUS CLASSES. IT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A SECOND REPORT ANALYZING THE RESULTS OF WRITTEN AND ORAL TESTS GIVEN TO THE SAME STUDENTS. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE 20TH UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE, LEXINGTON, APRIL 27-29, 1967. (JD)

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TEACHING JAPANESE IN MULTIPLE LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT (REPORT I)

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This is Report I of an empirical study of approximately 480 students enrolled in Japanese language classes at four Los Angeles City high schools under USC-Carnegie Language Project. Purposes of this study are as follows:

(1) to make a linguistic analysis of degrees of interference by one's first language (English) in learning a second language (Japanese).

(2) to determine relative advantages and disadvantages of varied degrees of exposure to the target language (Japanese) in students' home environment.

(3) to suggest a scientific approach in teaching a second language to classes of varied linguistic backgrounds.

Background and Nature of This Study

In view of increasing emphasis upon language study in the U.S. educational system, the Department of Asian Studies at University of Southern California initiated Japanese and Chinese classes in high schools of the Los Angeles Areas in September 1963, sponsored by Carnegie Corporation. Enrollment in the Japanese classes has grown from 164 students in three high schools 1963 to 477 in four high schools 1966. As supervisor of Japanese classes under the project, I have been preparing instructional materials, training teachers, and supervising class instruction. One of the major problems encountered in supervising class instruction is the linguistic heterogeneity of class constituents. It has been proven impossible to cover the same amount of instructional materials in different

classes. Some classes consist of all non-Japanese descents, and other classes practically all Japanese descents of varied backgrounds -- second, thrid, fourth, and fifth generation Japanese - Americans, etc.

This study which is mainly based upon questionnaires, written tests, and oral tests by tape-recording will present a comprehensive analysis of relative advantages and disadvantages of varied linguistic environment in language learning. Results of this analysis will suggest a scientific approach to second language teaching.

Analytical Study of "Questionnaire A"

"Questionnaire A" was prepared with a view to obtaining information as to the student's linguistic environment at home, linguistic background, and self evaluation of proficiency in Japanese language. The first group of 303 questionnaires have been answered and returned to the investigator from Dorsey and Gardena High Schools of Los Angeles City School District.

These 303 questionnaires have been classified and tabulated under Groups A-B-C-D in order to determine the relation between varied degrees of exposure to the target language at home environment and self evaluated proficiency scale of the language in five areas of learning as listed below. Result of tabulation indicates that the sub-classification of A-(a) (Born in Japan and came to the U.S. at the age of 4 years old) and A-(b) (Born in the U.S.) gives more significance than the sub-classification of A-1,2,3 which indicates varied extent of Japanese language used in home environment. Therefore, the following analysis is made on the basis of A-(a) and A-(b) instead of A-1, A-2, A-3. In the case of "Groups

B-C-D" no sub-classification is considered necessary, because only an insignificant number of students in these groups belong to the "Born in Japan" category.

Summary of Questionnaire "A"

I. Linguistic environment at Home

Group A: I hear Japanese daily. 157

1. Parents speak to me in Japanese. 96
2. Parents speak in Japanese between themselves. 59
3. A member (members) of my family speak Japanese daily. 2

Group B: I hear Japanese frequently at home 44

1. I have relatives, friends, and neighbors who speak J. 41
2. We frequently have visitors, guests, customers, etc. who speak J. 2
3. I have a friend or friends who are from Japan. 1

Group C: I hear Japanese occasionally. 65

1. I hear Japanese at grandparents', relatives, etc. 51
2. I work in a Japanese store, office, etc. 4
3. I often go to Japanese movies, stores, restaurants, etc. 10

Group D: I do not hear Japanese outside our classroom. 37

II. Linguistic Background

Group A:
(a) I was born in Japan. 51
(b) I was born in the U.S. 106

Group B:
(a) I was born in Japan. 4
(b) I was bron in the U.S. (No indication 3) 37

Group C:
(a) I was born in Japan. 1
(b) I was born in the U.S. 64

Group D:
(a) I was born in Japan. 1
(b) I was born in the U.S. 36

III. Students' Self Evaluation of Proficiency in Japanese

	Most Difficult	Easiest
Groups A-(a)	Grammar-21	49-Hearing
A-(b)	Grammar-37	80-Vocabulary
B	Grammar-31	21-Vocabulary
C	Hearing-43	21-Vocabulary
D	Hearing-28	13-Vocabulary

Five Areas:
Hearing Comprehension
Speaking including pronunciation, intonation, accent, etc.
Vocabulary
Grammar--Practical usage of sentence patterns, verbs, function words, etc.

Analysis of Proficiency Evaluation in Relation to the Varied Linguistic Environment

Tabulation of the questionnaire indicates that a third of "Group A" rated "Grammar" as most difficult, while the majority of "Group A-(a)" rated "Hearing" as easiest and the majority of "A-(b)" rated "Vocabulary" as easiest. It is obvious that "Group A" students who are daily exposed to the language have ability to understand spoken Japanese passively and have a sizable vocabulary. The same tabulation also reveals that "Group A" students may have problems in producing Japanese speech for communication. The typical situation is that their parents speak to them in Japanese or in mixture of Japanese and English, and the children use English in reponse.

"Group B" students also rated "Grammar" as most difficult and half of the group rated "vocabulary" as easiest. However, the same half of this group checked the category: "Most words we learn in class are new to me." In contrast, the majority of "Group A" students who consider "Vocabulary" as easy checked the category: "I have known most of the Japanese words which we learn in class." This explains the fact that "Group B" students find it easy to learn Japanese words, even though they are new to them. We can further suspect that thay might have heard many of the new words some time in their life, or they might know some words which are similar to the new ones.

"Hearing" is rated most difficult and "Vocabulary" as easiest by "Group C". There seems to be a great gap between "Group B" and "Group C" in degree of exposure to the language. Japanese is obviously as foreign to this group as it is to "Group D," except for

vocabulary items which they occasionally hear in their association with Japanese speaking relatives or friends.

"Group D" students rated "Hearing" as most difficult and "Vocabulary" as easiest to learn. "Group D" consists largely of non-Japanese descents. Although "Hearing" is rated as most difficult by the majority of this group, it is closely followed by "Speaking" as next difficult. The fact that rating by this group is widely spread reflects the complexity of language learning, that is, each area of learning is as difficult as the others. It is interesting to note that "Grammar" is not rated as most difficult by this group, in contrast to the rating by "Groups A-B." It is evident that the students of "Group D" tend to depend more upon grammar in learning the language than by pure memory or context.

"Relative Difficulty" Analyzed by Teachers

Teachers of high school Japanese classes have been asked to give their comments on the following items:

Hearing Comprehension

Teachers agreed that, excepting"Group A", there is no significant difference in "Hearing comprehension" among different groups. Difference of hearing ability seems to depend more upon individual intellectual capacity, attitude, linguistic aptitude, and motivation than environmental difference.

Speaking Ability

There is a marked difference in speaking ability among "Groups A-B-C-D." Tendency to substitute English sounds for newly acquired Japanese sounds is prevalent among all groups except "Group A-(a)," although it seems comparatively easy for "Groups B-C" students to

learn to produce new sounds. It frequently requires intensive drill for "Group D" students. However, according to the teachers' opinion, intensively drilled "Group D" students frequently attain better pronunciation than the relaxed "Group B-C" students.

Reading Ability

Difference of linguistic environment seems to be least reflected in reading ability. This proves that learning to read in the Japanese written system, hiragana, is an entirely new discipline for all Groups, except those who went to school in Japan or those who went to private Japanese schools in the U.S.

Grammar Learning

Learning to recognize and manipulate a new set of structural system seems to be equally difficult for all groups. The teachers noted, however, that it takes much longer time and requires a variety of drills for "Groups C-D" students to realize the semantic situation or context in which each sentence pattern can be used. Advantage of being exposed to the language and its cultural background is evident in this area. Students of "Group D" tend to depend upon English equivalent for each new sentence pattern rather than to understand the situation in which each pattern customarily occurs. It is natural and consequently easy for "Groups A-B" students to recognize the situation, due definitely to their linguistic as well as cultural experience.

Vocabulary

There is an obvious difference in the size of vocabulary among different groups. It is noticeably easier for "Groups A-B-C" students to learn and retain new vocabulary items than "Group C-D students,

because it is probable that "Groups A-B" students have heard these new words before, even though they may not recall them at the time of learning. After once learned, they would most likely recognize them repeatedly in their home environment. For "Groups C-D" students every vocabulary item is foreign with a new set of lexical meanings as well as new structural distributions.

In concluding this interim report on the study of "Teaching Japanese in Multiple Linguistic Environment," the following classroom activities are presented as a successful experiment at Gardena High School.

On the assumption that "Grammar" learning or learning the usage of Japanese sentence patterns is equally difficult for all four groups, and that vocabulary learning is comparatively easy, approximately 50% of class work is devoted to the pattern drill of various types. Our experience has proven that pattern learning is difficult even for "Group A" students, because these students have merely receptive or passive ability of the language. When Japanese is spoken in the familiar context, usually in the home environment, with limited vocabulary, in a few simple sentence patterns or short strings of phrases with English words mixed, they feel they understand the language, as indicated in their rating of "hearing" as the easiest item. However, difficulty develops when they are confronted with sentence patterns spoken properly with a new set of vocabulary outside their familiar context.

In order to give enough practice to students of all groups on automatic production of the language, the following types of drill have been effective as well as "enjoyable." One of the high school

students truthfully confessed, "We have never enjoyed hard work as we did in this class."

Oral Expansion Drill

As soon as a new sentence pattern is introduced and practiced in the customary manner, that is, imitation-repetition-substitution-questions and answers, etc., an intensive expansion drill is given to individual students for a period of 10-15 minutes. In this drill students are encouraged to use the newly acquired patterns and vocabulary with familiar ones, expanding their speech as much as possible. While they are using them in speech, they learn to discriminate appropriate situations for the customary usage of each vocabulary item and sentence pattern. This drill gives opportunity to all groups of students, including "Group A," to try out their stored vocabulary in different sentence patterns, in different context, and to learn the semantic as well as the structural distributions of each word and sentence pattern in "close-to" natural situation. By using each new item of learning in original sentences, students are constantly reminded that mere transference of one lexical meaning of an English word to a seemingly equivalent word in Japanese does not work. For example, they realize by experience that transferring one lexical meaning of English "paper" to "kami", "to play" to "asobu", or "to call" to "yobu" does not work in the following situations.

Kami o kaite imashita. (I was writing a paper.)

Nichiyobi ni piyano o asobimashita. (I played the piano on Sunday.)

Denwa o yobimasu. (I'll make a phone call.)

Pattern Drill in Dialogue and Oral Composition by Pictures

Pattern drill in dialogue or oral composition exercise by pictures is scheduled for 10-15 minutes daily as part of review

exercises for the previous lesson. In the beginning of a class period students are asked to pair off, each pair consisting of one "Group A" student and one "Group B, C, or D" student. The idea is to have one of the pair lead the dialogue and stimulate the other to keep the conversation lively. Students are instructed to use the newly acquired sentence patterns and vocabulary with their familiar ones. In this exercise students of all groups have opportunity to practice their newly learned patterns in their actual dialogue situation.

Oral composition exercise is frequently given for the same purpose as above, and is just as effective, depending upon the nature of sentence patterns and vocabulary items. Each individual student is asked to tell a story or give a description of a picture (magazine cut-out) which has been handed to him in the beginning of the class. Five to ten students can give their 1-2 minute talks, using the particular sentence pattern and vocabulary of the previous lesson in 15 minutes.

These intensive drill activities have proved to be quite successful, particularly in the following respects:

(1) To give opportunity to students of varied linguistic environment to use their skill to maximum.

(2) To give practice of using the acquired skill in varied situations outside text book context.

Report II which is planned to be completed by next spring will include analysis of written tests on some sentence patterns and oral tests by tapes. In the meantime, any suggestions, advice, or comments will be greatly appreciated.